

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHLM #0884/01 2591018
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 161018Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0519
INFO RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3294

UNCLAS COLOMBO 000884

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/RD/SCA, DS/DSS/ITA, CA AND SA/INS
INFO NEW DELHI FOR LEGAL ATTACHE'

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY COLOMBO EAC MEETING 09/16/2009

¶1. (SBU) Summary: AmEmbassy Colombo convened an Emergency Action Committee (EAC) meeting on September 16, 2009. The EAC discussed post's security posture in light of an impending Congressionally mandated report regarding allegations of war crimes during the waning months of the Government of Sri Lanka's (GSL) military offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), or Tamil Tigers. The EAC discussed RSO's proposals for additional security measures after the Department of State presents the report to Congress on Monday, Sept. 21, 2009. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) On September 16, 2009, AmEmbassy Colombo convened an EAC meeting. Present for the meeting were the Ambassador, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, Regional Security Officer, Regional Affairs Officer, Political Officer, Economic Officer, Management Officer, Consular Officer, Public Affairs Officer, USAID Acting Director, Defense Attache', Office of Defense Cooperation Chief, Marine Security Guard Detachment Commander, International Broadcasting Bureau Station Chief, Community Liaison Officer, Department of Homeland Security representative, and Medical Officer. The agenda items for the meeting were:

¶A. The upcoming (September 21) State Department report to Congress regarding alleged war crimes during the waning months of the GSL's military offensive and defeat of the LTTE;

¶B. The possibility that the report will raise the USG's profile and cause security concerns for U.S. Mission employees and facilities; and

¶C. RSO's proposals to mitigate potential security problems.

¶3. (SBU) The EAC discussed the war crimes report and concurred that, regardless of the contents, the GSL and a large segment of society will disagree with the findings, and especially if it levels war crimes allegations against the GSL security forces and military commanders, which are currently riding a wave of popularity following the government's defeat of the Tamil Tigers in May, 2009. The RSO opined, and the EAC concurred, that the report could foment unrest and protests against the USG, raise the profile of Mission employees, and thus affect Mission security negatively. RSO reminded the EAC that protesters at the British High Commission and the Canadian High Commission in recent months had vandalized both diplomatic missions and tried to breach the perimeters to gain entry to the facilities' compounds. The RSO noted that the Sri Lanka Police Service (SLPS) had failed to respond adequately to protect the British and Canadian facilities from demonstrators. The SLPS's standard operating procedure is to prevent demonstrators from approaching within two blocks of the U.S. Embassy. However, the RSO was concerned that the atmosphere of friction between the USG and the GSL may engender a change of plans whereby the SLPS would allow demonstrators to gain proximity to U.S. facilities or would

not provide adequate security should demonstrators turn violent.

¶4. (SBU) RSO proposed the following measures, with which the EAC concurred:

¶A. RSO will put the SLPS on notice by sending a letter to the Inspector General of Police (IGP), requesting the IGP to assign additional police personnel to USG facilities (Chancery, the American Center and the EMR) and to have additional police on standby to react quickly to the facilities.

¶B. From September 21 - 25, the RSO will assign extra guard personnel to the above facilities for inner perimeter defense and additional surveillance detection personnel for external observation and advance warning of possible demonstrations. Extra Marine Security Guards (MSGs) will be on station at the Chancery, with the entire Detachment on standby for immediate recall.

¶C. To ensure the Embassy's emergency notification system is working efficiently, the EAC must ensure 100 percent participation in the weekly radio check on Friday, September 25.

¶D. The EAC must ensure that RSO has all cellular phone numbers (American employees, family members, locally-engaged employees) in the Internet-based text messaging notification system.

¶E. The RSO recommended that employees alter their "routine" arrival times and should consider arriving much earlier or later than usual to avoid traffic jams and to give RSO time to assess the situation each day.

¶5. (SBU) Additionally, the EAC noted that while drafting the war crimes report, its authors had relied in part on reports from certain sectors regarding conditions in the war zone during the last months of the conflict. The EAC concurred that post should notify specific "at risk" entities of the probability that the report will raise their profile and affect the security posture of these organizations and their personnel.

¶6. (U) Post will continue to monitor the security environment prior to and after the release of the report. Post will report further developments, if any, septel. Special Agent Michael V. Perkins (Regional Security Officer) is the point of contact for this action. S.A. Perkins may be contacted at 94.11.249.8885, 94.11.249.8888 (MSG Post 1 after regular business hours), or via the classified and unclassified email systems.
BUTENIS